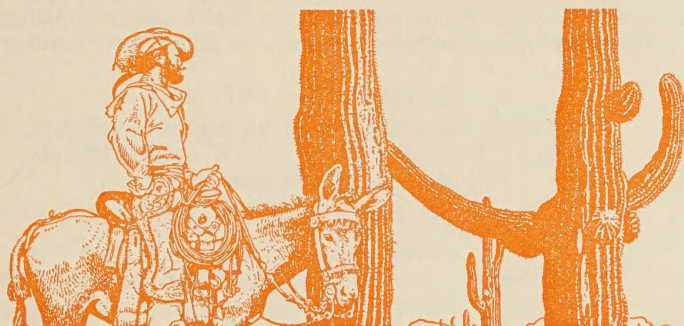


# The Book Club of California Quarterly News-Letter

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Porter Garnett Revisited

W. Bentley

The McCune Collection

A. Newman

The Lkw Press, at the Sign of the Bloody Thumb

R. H. Dillon

Review: A Buckeye Bibliophile

Gifts & Acquisitions

Serendipity

Elected to Membership

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## Porter Garnett Revisited:

*Reminiscences and an Ode to Creativity*

by Wilder Bentley the Younger

The rekindling of interest in the writings and creative output of the printer Porter Garnett, a consequence of the recent publication of Jack Stauffacher's collection of this most gifted and influential figure's essays on the book, and illustrations of his carved inscriptions,\* has awakened in me, for the second time in my life, the urge to record various reminiscences and observations. This urge is strengthened by the realization that I am, after this long time, one of the few living mortals who actually knew this man while he was alive.

Twenty-some years in the past, I first felt vague stirrings to a similar end, which became more acute as I realized that the people I knew to have been close to Porter, or P.G., as those who were close to him sometimes addressed him, were one by one meeting that end which awaits every mortal sooner or later. I speak now of the generation that was of the age that any children of Porter and Edna, his wife, would have been if they had had any; the generation of his pupils at the Laboratory Press and of the many others who had been drawn to him as his years ripened, his critical and creative powers matured, and the press of earning a living remitted to the extent that he could entertain at his home at the Foote Ranch, in Knight's Valley, north of Calistoga, California. Here he had retired when his days in Pittsburgh were over.

\* *Porter Garnett: Philosophical Writings on the Ideal Book*, compiled by Jack W. Stauffacher, published by The Book Club of California, San Francisco, California, 1994.

These stirrings I speak of came to no particular end. I found that Grace Bird, who was, in essence, Porter's amanuensis, and who had inherited nearly all of his papers, those inscriptional plaques still in his possession, and his collection of photographs and other memorabilia, was still living; and lived, somewhat to my surprise, in an apartment in Berkeley in the same neighborhood I had lived in as a boy, when my father ran the Archetype Press, the output of which made him justly famous in the annals of Western bibliophilia.

An interview with her put me at ease on the score that Porter's memory would not be forgotten, for I learned that the papers were on their way to the Bancroft Library at the University of California.

Moreover, I would have had to chase grant money because of the limited resources at my disposal. This I already knew from experience would result in wasted effort and endless delays.

So, twenty-odd years ago I let the matter slide. In 1994, Jack Stauffer's book just about summed up the story, and there is left for me at this point only the obligation, if I may so put it, to affix a few afterthoughts.

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I should like at this time to state categorically, unequivocally, and without fear of contradiction that Porter pronounced his last name "GAR-nett," like the semi-precious stone, garnet, and not "GarNETT," to rhyme with "lorgnette," "baguette," or the like. Think of it this way: His ancestors had come from Virginia, and in the vernacular of the South, there is a liking for the trochee as opposed to the iamb. "YOU-all" could be taken as an example, but often this blends into a monosyllable or even a spondee. How about "SWEET-milk" or "ARSH-taters" (Irish potatoes)?

Still, I have it on my mother's authority that P.G. never took offense when people who did not know him called him "GarNETT." By and by they would come around to his way of doing it, if they knew him long enough.

I can reproduce an anecdote of his that I heard more than once. In those days it was possible, and often done, to communicate by telegraph with a passenger en route by train. The message was no doubt sent to a station ahead of where the train was at a given time, recorded on paper, put in an envelope, transferred to the train without slowing it down, and delivered to the passenger.

So it happened that a friend, who had previously arranged with Porter to meet him at a particular destination, changed his mind, sent a telegram to that effect, and asked in it that Porter get off somewhere else; and that this telegram was never delivered. Porter, happening to glance out the window when the train was stopped somewhere before the agreed-on destination, felt some consternation to see his friend standing there on the platform.

Gathering his possessions, Porter hastily got off, found his friend, found out that the telegram had been sent but not delivered; and so the two of them returned to the car in which Porter had been traveling. They found the porter — in those days, always a black man — who had been in attendance and asked him why he had been remiss in delivering the message. Upon which the man, by way of exoneration, said that he had seen the message, but added, "They ain't no porter on this train named GAR-nett!" Pronounced as above: *Quod erat demonstrandum*.

I can remember that Porter used to tell this one on himself: He was such a spoiled child that he would rise when he felt like it, get dressed, and go down to the dining room. Everyone else had long since eaten, I presume. He then breakfasted in solitary splendor. The butler would

bring in a large silver platter, raise the cover, and there would be a pile of pancakes, from which the young master would select a few that were the most perfectly golden brown on both sides to eat, sending the rest back to the kitchen. One would think that the education of such a child, entrusted, as Stauffacher's book records, to a tutor, would have been sporadic at best.

So it happened, as Porter himself recounted, that he arrived at adulthood an ignoramus, and so by his own efforts gained an education by plowing through the books in the Mechanics' Institute Library. He appears to have been, almost completely, an autodidact. How he learned Latin, mastered French, and knew at least some Italian, I know not. Maybe the tutor got in there after all.

As my reader will no doubt have figured out, I am of the second generation after Porter, and was around him frequently from my fourth year to about my thirteenth, when World War II intervened. My father never bothered to replace the car that had worn out because there was no gas to be had anyway, and the visits to Rancho Mallacomes (the Foote Ranch) fell off, as did Porter's visits to Berkeley. I do recall trailing along on one excursion that touched base at the home of Xavier Martinez, probably one of the last of Porter's buddies from the Bohemian Club of their youth, but this was later on.

In the Laboratory Press days, and after the gang had all moved back to God's Country (California!), my pattern was to mooch food from Edna (who still cooked on her wood-burning stove even though there were the conveniences). Then I would hunt up one of Porter's brothers-in-law, Calvin Foote, whom I followed around like a puppy as he tended to the ranch's business, or go on some adventure with Tim Foote, Edna's nephew.

But, as the heat of the summer's day blended into a paradisiacally warm summer's eve, the elders gathered, more often than not, outside in the garden, to sit by the fish pond and talk of esthetics and politics and whatever else my childish mind never understood. I was usually to be found, after a while, passed out in a corner, lulled to sleep by the drone of adult voices, until I was awakened to be put to sleep in a proper bed.

Porter, by common assent, did most of the talking, for by the late thirties he had become extremely deaf. Probably by reason of the absence of TV and the relative novelty of radio, those people knew how to expound

and how to listen, both. If a little too much self-promotion and driving ambition were the common defects of the era, at least they did know how to be agreeable to being entertained by each other.

Because in the late thirties I was frequently a guest at the summer home of Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Townsend, whose place was down the road from the Foote Ranch, I then mixed to a greater extent in Porter's life, providentially at the time when his inscriptional carving was gathering steam. I watched this work progress, noted his tools, was present when the photographer who took the pictures that are now in the Bancroft did his work, and so forth. And so was the twig bent, for I ultimately took to that work myself — but that is another story. That, and my printing activities. Suffice it that I am a practitioner right square in the lineage, and if any should doubt it, by virtue of the obscurity in which I have seen my labors shrouded, *opera ipsa loquuntur*, as they say.

I should add that the photographer was a certain Mr. King, who was an executive with the Standard Oil Company of California.

David Clarence Greenhood, in his appreciation of P.G. reprinted in Jack Stauffacher's book, provides the best critical assessment of Porter's work, combined with the warmest personal tribute, that I have seen. This is a gem. He notes that Porter was an aristocrat. The cultural epicenter of the America in which Porter grew up believed implicitly that this America's culture was destined to be an extension of European culture, that the history of the English-speaking people who first came here was to be the history of everyone else, be he Jew, Italian, Oriental, African, or whatever. All this was articulated by spokesmen such as Teddy Roosevelt with an assurance that has gone by the board by this time. The Idol of the Tribe rules with such force that every tribe to come here will articulate its own history, and evolve its own esthetic, until a blend may emerge in some future time. Doesn't it seem this way now?

So Porter lived in a now-distant time, and an attempt to replicate his act would be an anachronism at best. His esthetic was formed by Ruskin, the Abbey Theater, and *The Yellow Book*, now entities noted only in college English courses on Yeats; by figures such as James McNeill Whistler; by movements such as the Pre-Raphaelites — now all just apparatus of a bygone age.

Where does the fine printer go from here? Today the kind of support Porter relied on for the furtherance of his projects is totally absent. No

more *noblesse oblige* in the 1990s. We might consider three personalities: Andrew Carnegie, William Randolph Hearst, and Bill Gates.

The first founded the institution that housed the Laboratory Press, as well, of course, as financing the construction of hundreds of small libraries all across America so that the populace might improve itself. The second, while perhaps a spoiled child in some ways, had at least the kind of education that taught him that the best human achievement is that which is done by the hand guided by the eye and mind; and the third, from what I learn from the daily press, expresses his philanthropy by making donations of computers to public schools. This cannot fail to be good for his business. He has at the same time constructed a mansion in which the visitor, wearing a "smart card," will be greeted upon entering a room by images of paintings by his favorite artist displayed on built-in video tubes and by the music of his favorite composer wafting down from concealed speakers. What happens when two people show up with different tastes is not recorded in my source for this information.

I think I can see a certain decline in cultural sensibility and a tendency to reject the example of the past, its accomplishments along with its mistakes, creeping into our collective American consciousness over the generations. Am I alone in this? These three men of wealth represent a mass-pattern, but they represent the class from which the artist or craftsman must expect support. In the choices they made for spending their money there seems to have been a certain trend toward self-absorption, toward an involuntal withdrawal from responsibility for the collective improvement and raising of the cultural level. Perhaps I am wrong in this. But still, where does the fine printer go from here? Whatever the cause, the support is lacking, that much is sure.

In this context, an appropriate and memorable quote from Carl Sandburg: "Money is like manure; it only does any good if you spread it around."

Further implications suggest themselves when we reflect on the story of Porter's life and the ideas he felt compelled to examine in his writings and to present to his pupils. His own work as a printer and typesetter was painstaking in the extreme; this much is plain. David Clarence Greenhood's appreciation of Porter touches on this point.

To draw examples from other media of artistic expression, an ink-painting by Sesshu was done of a sudden, in one burst. A painting by

Leonardo was built up of thousands of brush-strokes so executed as to efface every trace of their individual existence. These examples represent two extremes of artistic approach, which can be usefully brought to mind in the dilemma of the fine printer at the end of the twentieth century. With patronage drying up, the printer can learn to work in a hurry. To court the rough-hewn and rustic look, so to speak.

At any rate, the fine printer today, as always, would be warned to look askance at the losses as well as the benefits of his choice to permit the machine to quicken his task, if he chooses to do so. When a human hand shapes an object, this object, when complete, bears the stamp of its author's humanity and individuality, both. As the machine takes over the decision-making, all this is lost, and the product degenerates into a total violation of Porter's sacred precepts: Thou shalt not imitate, cater, seek novelty for its own sake; nothing vulgar, nothing commonplace, nothing inept. So much is the dictate of the Creator. Nothing of civilization is to be discovered in any of this. The "paperback" is the ultimate debasement of the book as an artifact.

In the mid-eighties your present author, ever the jokester, foisted on the public this hoax:

#### COLOPHON

Printed from copy produced by  
an  
Epsom squirt-jet printer, using  
Nectarine floppy disk  
and memory-retrieval system

*This typeface was a favorite of the late-twentieth century printer Lafcadio Midgley, who was one of the first to recognize the potential of the system. The classical grace of the letters of this example were widely admired in their time, and while....*

I thus summed up the then-current trend, stimulated by my perusal of several "rare book" exhibits that were shown at the time, here and there in the Bay Area. Something was going wrong.

In last Spring's Newsletter of The Book Club of California, Richard-Gabriel Rummonds, printer and owner of the Plain Wrapper Press of

Verona (whose *duomo* has the most beautiful bells I have ever heard — or did in 1953 when I was there), wrote of the travails and tribulations that anyone who would attempt to replicate Porter's approach would have had to endure, even in the 1970s, the years of the last gasp of the craft tradition of printing as a viable endeavor, considered economically.

Starting at about the same time as Richard-Gabriel, I evolved an entirely different approach, admittedly one not dictated by eternal law, but generated out of my own temperament. No patronage? Operate from the gutter! From the unused rural barn! Assume no clientele exists, no demand for the product! — My own version of P.G.'s doctrine of "paucism, or oligophilia."

To operate outside the whims of current fashion, and to resist obedience to these, is to endure total obscurity and what amounts to the same thing, critical obloquy, but I have led a full life, and ultimately the test of any creative work is whether or not it gets thrown away. No amount of promotion can save it from that fate, if the work's fame and fortune rested on promotion in the first place. Whether the work sells, in an era of market demographics and patronage from a public seeking secure investments, is of virtually no importance, in the long view of things.

I would like to close with the words of Teobaldo Manuzio, better known as Aldus Manutius, who wrote more or less the following: "I have chosen, instead of a life of ease and comfort, an anxious and toilsome career." He, too, apparently, worked out of a barn.

LAUS DEO

Since the year 1963, Wilder Bentley the Younger has devoted his life and creative energy to the promulgation of the religious and cultural values of the American Native Peoples. To this end he has practiced the crafts of oil and watercolor painting, inscriptional carving, all crafts associated with the hand-made book, the composition of music in traditional harmony, the authorship of poetry, plate making, both relief and engraved, wood engraving, jewelry making, piano tuning, and car repair. He lives in Occidental, California.

## The McCune Collection:

One of Two Great Legacies of Dr. Donovan J. McCune

Alfred E. Newman

The City of Vallejo is the owner of the first great legacy; The Book Club of California has the other. Who was Donovan J. McCune and what did he give to Vallejo? The short answers are that he was a distinguished medical doctor who was interested in all matters pertaining to the book, and that he gave to his adopted city a collection of materials of significant interest to bibliophiles, printers, and bookbinders.

McCune was born June 24, 1902, in Ohio. He received his A.B. degree at Georgetown University in 1924 and his M.D. degree from Johns Hopkins Medical School in 1928. After internship and residencies, he specialized in pediatrics. He joined the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, and served on its faculty from 1931 to 1951, and was made a full professor in 1944. He wrote and contributed to over fifty articles and works on pediatrics and was honored for his efforts in the treatment of children by the governments of Poland and Columbia and by many societies in the United States.

Vallejo is at the northeast corner of San Francisco Bay on the north side of the Sacramento River. It has a population of a little over one hundred thousand. Until closed in April 1996, its Mare Island Naval Shipyard, with a generally stable civilian work force of about ten thousand in the decades after World War II, was the principal industry of the city. From 1854 until its closure, the shipyard built over five hundred naval vessels, including diesel and nuclear submarines, and repaired countless others. Third and even fourth generations of marine engineers and skilled craftsmen spent their working lives at the shipyard.

Many people came to work in Vallejo during World War II. Kaiser Foundation Hospital was built to serve the workers in the greatly expanded shipyard and in the community and became, over the years, Vallejo's largest non-public employer, part of the Kaiser-Permanente Medical Group. McCune was lured to Vallejo as Chief of Pediatrics early in 1951, became its Physician in Chief in 1953, and later served as staff assistant to the director of the entire Permanente Medical Group. He participated in many community activities and served with distinction in leadership roles. From contacts arising from my law practice and service with him,

beginning in 1960, on the Board of Directors of the Solano County Legal Aid Society, I made friends with a kindly, quiet man, but one of commanding personal presence. If his first love was medicine, his second then was certainly books. Out of that love and community spirit, starting in 1961, came ten years of service on the Vallejo City Library Board, which ended in 1971 when he suffered a disabling stroke. The service on the library board led to a series of donations which form the core of The McCune Collection.

He was a scholar versed in Latin and a discerning collector of fine and rare books in the fields of fine printing and the classics. He became a member of The Book Club of California in 1958 and the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco in 1961. He contributed articles to the *Quarterly News-Letter*: "Les Barbou Imprimeurs: Lyon-Limoges-Paris (1524-1820)" (Spring 1966) and "Henry Morris: Printer, Paper Maker, Bookbinder, Writer, Publisher" (Summer 1967). He gave talks to his Roxburghe Club on two occasions. While in Vallejo, McCune burnished his skill as a fine bookbinder. He stamped some of the early leather slipcases he made "Mal fecit. McCune," but soon was able to change that to "Fecit. McCune," followed in each case by the year. He took up letterpress printing as the Beagle Press, importing from England, among other equipment, an 1852 Albion press. Two of his closest friends, as well as mentors, were Roger Levenson and Henry Evans, each a skilled printer and expert in the book arts generally.

During the years 1965 to 1970, McCune donated his extensive collections to the City of Vallejo, all to be housed in rooms specifically planned for holding them in the city's new John F. Kennedy Library, which was designed during his tenure on the board. Included in the series of gifts were about 3,000 books and a great deal of ephemera. The books included about 300 Latin classics, a nearly complete collection of Limited Editions Club books to 1970, and about 750 in the general field of the history of printing. There were many incunabula and works from all the great historical presses: Aldine, Ashendene, Baskerville, Bodoni, Kelmscott, and Doves.

Representing more modern publishers were some 132 of the Nonesuch Press and all of The Book Club of California publications from the first in 1914 through 1970. Avid collectors will understand McCune's exhilaration when he penned the note placed in the book that completed his set of The Club's first one hundred books.

There was a good selection of California printers: Nash, Ritchie, Marks, Grabhorn, and Allen, among others. There was nearly everything Henry Evans had done under his Porpoise and Peregrine Press imprints, some 154 items, seventy-seven of which were books, substantial pamphlets, or folios of his botanical and other prints.

The printing equipment McCune donated included the Albion press made by Hopkinson and Cope. It is a Demy, twenty-four by eighteen inches at the platen, stands six and a half feet tall, and weighs just under two thousand pounds. McCune had acquired it from a London supplier in a close race in which his fortuitous cablegram prevented its acquisition by the University of Texas. There is a table-top proof press, type cases filled with fonts of Centaur and Antigua type, stocks of handmade paper, and all the other paraphernalia of a printer well able to support his hobby.

Gold leaf, rolls of binding leathers, book presses, literally hundreds of galleys, and other binding equipment and supplies were donated and delivered to the 3,000 square feet of rooms especially designed to hold the collection. There is a large room for reading and meetings and the housing of books in glass-fronted display cases. There are smaller rooms for the press (with sinks and bathroom, of course) and for supplies and storage. There is a spacious walk-in vault to hold the special treasures, which include a leaf from Gutenberg's forty-two-line Bible, the incunabula, and the Kelmscott Chaucer.

When the new library was completed and the collection installed, it was opened occasionally to the public, but then it languished. There were several reasons: The lack of a rare book librarian and resources to hire one; the merger of the Vallejo Library into a county-wide library system; the illness of McCune, which prevented him from giving personal attention to the collection; and the departure for greener pastures of the former City Librarian, who had had a sincere interest in it. Title to the collection remained with the city, and no one really was assigned or assumed specific responsibility for it. Dr. McCune died on April 11, 1976.

Thus from 1974 until 1982 the collection was largely unused, unattended, and almost forgotten. The rooms became merely a storage area for the collection and odds and ends which had not been transferred to the county. Fortunately, in 1982, the County Librarian, formerly the Vallejo City Librarian, took action. She recommended that a study be made to determine whether the collection should be used and made available to

the public or abandoned and sold. McCune had shown great foresight in specifically authorizing a sale of all or parts of the collection should doing so ever prove necessary or desirable.

The City Council contracted with a private concern for an inventory of the collection and a detailed study of its condition, value, and potential use. Parts of that expensive study were valuable. Muir Dawson appraised the collection at more than \$300,000.00. Leslie Morris, who later became special collections librarian at the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia, did a most capable job of cataloging the books. An advisory committee of experts, including Gary Kurutz and Florian Shasky, as well as a committee appointed from the community, on which I served, watchdogged the contractor. It was determined that the collection had not suffered from the neglect mainly because Vallejo enjoys a great climate for books.

The ultimate findings and recommendations, reached only after vigorous discussions, were approved by the City Council. They were for keeping the collection, but with the sale of some of the books to create an endowment to produce income for the maintenance, preservation, and use of it. About one-third of the books, including all of the Limited Edition Club volumes, and the duplicates, many of the Latin classics, and some of the early press items were sold at auction in San Francisco. Care was taken to keep representative examples of each press. The auction, conducted by Butterfield and Butterfield jointly with Swann Galleries, created a net endowment fund of a little over \$65,000.00 after commissions. A collection committee of five to manage the collection and to advise the Vallejo Library Advisory Board was created by City ordinance. I was privileged to be appointed to that committee and became its first chairman.

There were, and still are, many challenges in bringing the dormant collection to life. In 1986, we held an exhibit in Vallejo's Naval and Historical Museum for publicity and raising funds. The late Henry Evans and his wife, Marsha, generously supported that opener. They allowed us to exhibit for the first time publicly his forty folio-sized linocut prints, each with a separate botanical description sheet, that comprise the fifty-copy portfolio, *California Native Wildflowers*. Museum volunteers, retirees from the shipyard, constructed the eight unique display cases needed for showing the portfolio prints. Four of these are still in use in the McCune

main room. Henry and Marsha also allowed us to exhibit and sell botanical prints from their inventory, the McCune and the Museum sharing the sale proceeds. This generosity and a large donation from Kaiser Hospital added a substantial amount to the endowment fund. With other donations, the fund now produces an income of about \$5,000.00 a year.

Efforts since 1986 to make the collection available for enjoyment and research have been fun for the unpaid committee and other volunteers. Books were reshelfed, generally by printer. Book Club of California books, now complete by donation and purchase, and in mylar wrappers, have been shelved in numbered, chronological order. Complete sets of the Keepsakes and the *Quarterly News-Letter*, all in slipcases, are nearby. Books, serials, and monographs relating to printing and the technical aspects of book making have been kept together.

Until a usable card file could be made, it was felt unfeasible to open the collection to the public. This problem was solved by the committee's second chairman, the late Gordon Williams, a retired university librarian. He personally typed over two thousand 4" x 6" cards from which author, title, printer, and shelf-list catalogue files have been created. Williams's efforts have been continued and enhanced by Harlan Quinn, a collector of fine books, who has become in essence the curator of the collection.

For the last five years, the collection has been opened to the public on the first and third Tuesday afternoons of each month, staffed by two docent committee members or volunteers. It is also opened by appointment, and such requests are welcomed by Chairman Judy Hilberg (707 642-4469) or myself (707 642-9091) or fax to 707 642-9275. The McCune is located at 505 Santa Clara Street, Vallejo.

Visitors are free to use and enjoy all items, but only in the rooms. To make the collection more usable, the committee has recently contracted with the Solano County Library system to input the collection to the Solano and Napa Counties & Partners system known as SNAP. The monitor, modem, and printer to be supplied will provide a badly needed subject index and will permit access to other online bibliographic data bases.

In June of 1988, the late Dr. Helen Wallis, OBE, then Keeper of Maps at the British Library, initiated our most successful program, that of the Art of the Book talks and events. They have been held each year since then, with the sole exception of 1992, and have evolved into an annual pattern of seven Sunday afternoons, February through May and September

through November. Two of our speakers (Dominic Riley and Peggy DeMouthe) have offered low-fee follow-up classes to those interested in repairing cloth-covered books or constructing slipcases.

Other speakers have explained the intricacies of paper conservation (Karen Zukor), fine bookbinding (Joanne Sonnichsen), paper making (Lila Wahrhaftig) and paper marbling (Robin Heyeck). We have had the benefit of fine printers discussing that skill: talented amateurs (the late Dr. Edmund E. Simpson and Don and Kathi Fleming) as well as professionals (Peter Koch, Susan Acker, and Bruce Washbish). Insights have come from going down the Rabbit Hole and into the mind of Lewis Carroll (Dr. Sandor Burstein). We have heard of William Morris and his Kelmscott Press (Peter Stansky); the life and works of Henry Evans (Marsha Evans) and that of George Derby and the Phoenixiana (David Lundquist) and the making of the Nuremberg Chronicle (the late Joyce Wilson).

We have learned about the book trade (auctions: Bruce MacMakin; antiquarian: Jeffrey Thomas and Florian Shasky; children's books: Louise Moises and Shirley Massengill) as well as about book clubs (Jennifer Larson on The Book Club of California; Vincent Lozito on the Sacramento Book Collectors Club; and William P. Barlow, Jr., on still other bibliophile groups in the United States). We have heard about book publishing in the San Francisco Bay Area from the late D. Steven Corey and the University of California Press from Harlan Kessel. Peter Hanff introduced us to the Bancroft Library, David C. Weber opened our minds to the question of the future of university libraries, and, ever generous with his time and talent, Gary Kurutz has favored us twice, once on collecting Californiana and once on the compiling of his monumental Gold Rush bibliography.

Richard Dillon and the late Ellen Shaffer have visited Robert Louis Stevenson and Napa County for us, and our own committee members have tried to describe aspects of the collection: Harlan Quinn (on the incunabula which he exhibited to explain how pagination, tables of contents, and binding evolved) and Gordon Williams and myself on other aspects of the collection.

We also have enjoyed fine trips: To Jeff Craemer's printing museum and Mt. Tam Press in San Rafael, to the Michael and Margaret Harrison Western Research Library in Fair Oaks, and to the new San Francisco Public Library. We were pleased in 1988 to have those attending a joint meeting of

the Roxburghe and Zamorano Clubs visit us, as well as being significantly honored in 1997 by the award of an honorary library membership in The Book Club of California. Many readers will recognize that most of our speakers and events have been offered or suggested by those active in The Book Club of California or the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco, and the McCune Committee extends sincerest thanks to all of them.

Our Spring 1998 program includes talks on Valenti Angelo (Jack Maclean); on the literature of cartography (Norman J.W. Thrower); on the history and evolution of the traveler's companion, the guidebook (Reese Benson). Did you know that these appeared as early as 1650? We also plan to visit Sutro Library in San Francisco and hear a talk on its history.

One of our speakers, Dr. Andrew Jameson, not yet mentioned, commented, "I never realized that there was in Vallejo such a ferment of intellectual activity." To those reading this, please come and see for yourselves the tangible one of the two legacies left by Dr. Donovan J. McCune.

Al Newman is an attorney practicing in Vallejo; he is a past Director of The Book Club of California and a member of the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco. He enthusiastically collects Californiana, both books and maps.

## The Lkw Press, at the Sign of the Bloody Thumb

Richard H. Dillon

*Who's Who In California* (1979-80) informed us that L. Kenneth Wilson's first name was Lewis, but, to my knowledge, he rarely, if ever, used it. To those of us in post-World War II librarianship, he was always Ken or Kenny.

We remember Ken Wilson, who died in 1996, at this time because he was kind enough to make The Book Club a gift for its library, a personal archive of his printing ephemera. In letters to me, he called the collection "a bunch of stuff" that would suggest his "dabbling in the fine art of printing." But Kenny was a craftsman, and the Wilson Collection will become a valuable component of The Club library's fine-press ephemera section.

Ken was that *rara avis*, like Dave Heron, a working librarian who took up letterpress printing as a serious sideline. On one of his mini-autobiographies as a job applicant, he listed his outstanding interests. In first place, well ahead of walking, tennis, reading and piano playing, was "hobby printing," as he termed his avocation.

Kenneth Wilson was born in 1925 in the Colorado town of Lamar. He sandwiched Army service between years of undergraduate study, like so many of us, picking up an A.A. degree at Colorado College before taking his B.A. at UCLA in '49. There he fell under the influence of my own mentor, Lawrence Clark Powell, UCLA Librarian — and Oscar Lewis Award winner. He drifted across town to acquire his M.L.S. (Librarianship) degree at USC in 1952 and, that same year, took his first professional job as an assistant in Powell's splendid William Andrews Clark Library. Before the year was out, he was appointed Geology Librarian at UCLA, then became Assistant Head of the library's circulation department. His final post on the Westwood campus was as Coordinator of Departmental Libraries.

In the summer of 1957 Wilson was appointed Business and Technical Librarian at Santa Barbara Public Library. During 1958-59, he was Acting Chief Librarian for the city and county, then moved north to assume the duties of Director of Libraries in Palo Alto. He was "kicked upstairs" to the position of Managing Director of Community Services for the city but soon (1973) returned to more bookish pursuits as Library Services Director for the city of Burbank. He topped off his career as City Librarian of San Diego in 1978-79.

We then lost Ken to the private sector. He went to work as a sales representative for Gaylord, the library supplies firm, and ended up as its Western Regional Manager when he retired in 1991.

Ken demonstrated his interest in public service beyond librarianship by working in the civic activities of the Kiwanis, YMCA, United Fund, Salvation Army, Red Cross, and several sister-city commissions. He was a founding director of the Burbank Historical Society and the Palo Alto Historical Association.

Ken Wilson also served on advisory committees to San Jose City College and Foothill College, was a guest lecturer at San Jose State University and a member of the University of California President's Council for Librarianship. He did some writing, compiling *Know Your Geology Library* and *Know Your Geology Literature* whilst at UCLA; wrote articles for Burbank and Palo Alto municipal newsletters; and was editor (1968) of the California Library Association's journal, *California Librarian*.

But The Book Club should remember Kenny Wilson for his printing. His collection is of special value in documenting the doings of the Moxon

Chappel, which he joined, with his Lkw Press, at the Sign of the Bloody Thumb, when he arrived in Palo Alto. The Chappel was founded in 1957 as an informal organization of private press printers. By 1967, this printing elite had swollen to a membership of nineteen, including spouses for all but bachelor Roger Levenson — Wilson, Quyle, McDonald, Kane, MacMakin, Pfeiffer, Mahoney, Osborne, and McKinney. Seemingly a Peninsular outfit, the Chappel actually drew members from afar, Levenson from the People's Republic of Berkeley and, from the Mother Lode, Mahoney of Columbia and Quyle of Murphys.

Ken Wilson acquired a 10x15 Colt's Armory press from the late Lewis Osborne when the latter, fondly remembered today for his fine-press books of California and Oregon history, was production manager at *Sunset*. Lew had the press in the basement of his University Avenue home in Palo Alto, from which it was extracted by block and tackle and installed in the Wilson garage.

Many moons later, as Ken put it, he struck some kind of a three-way deal with George Kane of the Chappel, the well-known antiquarian bookman who was proprietor of the Chicken Hearted Press. In the swap, Ken got himself a bigger press. It was brought down to Palo Alto by Paul Quyle in his clay-hauling truck. Ken confessed to me that it was Quyle who later told him that he had reversed the flywheel on this first press. "I had printed all that stuff backwards!" Ken also proved, once again, that printers, like sign painters, are not the orthographers that proofreaders and copy editors tend to be. His very first line of letterpress type read: "These are the first lines prented by Kenny Wilson."

Kenny wrote me in 1995, "Oh, me!, but did I love that 10x15! But the 14x21 Colt's Armory, a job press, really gave me the opportunity to do larger stuff." He preferred the larger Colt's to the other presses he owned, a Keystone, a Civil War proof press, and a small Vandercook.

Lew Osborne was Wilson's chief printing mentor, aided and abetted by the likes of Paul Quyle, George Pfeiffer of *Sunset* and *American West*, J. Carroll Mahoney, Roger Levenson, and T. W. (Bill) McDonald, who will be remembered by Club old-timers as Black Mack. They were always helping him with advice and gifts of type, make-ready knives, paper, and other stuff. Then, on his own, our student printer used to spend Saturdays in San Francisco, haunting used type and equipment houses. Of these 'Frisco prowls he reminisced, "Wonderful days!"

Wilson described Osborne and McDonald as perfectionists, though the latter was color-blind. He also remembered how Lew, in critiques of his pupil's methodology and end results, was often "moaning that I would never learn!" Ken also recalled how his wife, Wilma, almost had a fit when Osborne tried to teach her husband how to print with kerosene and lampblack on dampened paper. The tyro emerged from his sanctuary, the printery/garage, looking "as messy as a pig in a feeding frenzy."

Ken described all of his press work as ephemeral. "I just had fun doing what I did; nothing serious except the 3 x 5 thing I did when Kennedy was assassinated."

Finally, Wilson sold the 14x21 press, along with his equipment — type, type cases, and "all the assorted printing junk I had accumulated" — to Dr. Ed Peto, a Los Angeles dermatologist who was active in the Rounce & Coffin Club. The press ended up at Scripps, where Fred Hoffman used it in the college's fine arts program in printing and typography.

But Kenny Wilson could not give up the craft "cold turkey." In his last years, he produced a few Print Shop software things. One of them in his gift collection is a Certificate of Retirement awarded to Southern California librarian Ty Harmsen.

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Many of the small items in the archive are Moxonian — dinner announcements, rosters, and (more or less tongue-in-cheek) minutes of meetings. But there are also family Christmas and Halloween cards, open house invitations, various letterheads, some issues of the *New Books* brochure of the Palo Alto Public Library, and a few keepsakes carrying favorite Wilsonian maxims.

There are also twenty broadsides, including Friends of the Palo Alto Public Library notices of meetings and book sales, handsome covers for (undoubtedly boring) library annual reports, announcements for Palo Alto's children's doll show and a travel film festival, a city employees' picnic, and a lecture by Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas in behalf of the Committee For Green Foothills.

## Review: A Buckeye Bibliophile

*Memoirs of a Bookman* (1990, \$14.95), *Rare Book Lore* (1992, \$34.95) and *Book-ing Pleasures* (1996, \$24.95) are volumes by Jack Mathews available from Ohio University Press (Athens, OH 45701). All three will be welcome additions to the shelves of readers who are book collectors and vice versa.

California, in its compulsive, almost narcotic, narcissism, hardly realizes that Ohio exists. The Golden State's citizenry, in its ignorance of the Midwest, would be hard put to distinguish Ohio State University from Ohio University. Ohio State, a sometime Rose Bowl visitor, is located in Columbus, whilst bookish Ohio U. is situated in an appropriately named college town, Athens, well to the southeast of the Big Ten "football factory." (To Los Angelesños, Ohio's Athenians reside due east of Charles Lummis's Chillicothe.) Athens is the home of both the University of Ohio Press and its publishing sidekick, the Swallow Press, née Allan Swallow Press, which has migrated from points west. The latter is treasured for its output of Western Americana.

Why this bookishness in Ohio? Perhaps because the state is the lengthened shadow of the New England of Emerson and Hawthorne, although actually settled by literate Nutmeggers from Connecticut rather than Massachusetts men.

As for Jack Mathews, earlier (1977, 1981) the author of the well-received *Collecting Books for Pleasure and Profit*, he is part of the A. Edward Newton tradition of shared bibliography, a sort of Buckeye Lawrence

Clark Powell. Like Larry Powell, he is a triple-threat *rara avis*. Mathews is not just a collector who really reads and, “worse,” writes, but a writer skilled in both fiction and non-fiction. A Guggenheim Fellow and Distinguished Professor of English on campus, Mathews has written novels, short stories, poems, and essays. But he is, *par excellence*, a book collector. In fact, he became so ambitious in his “booking,” as he calls the collecting of old and rare volumes, that he had to go into the antiquarian bookselling business himself. From his picture on dust jackets and ad copy, he appears to be a run-of-the-quad Midwestern prof. But, aha!, he betrays his interest in the Far West, or at least the Southwest, by sporting a silver Navajo bolo rather than a four-in-hand or bow tie.

Neither *Memoirs* nor *Booking* is an autobiography, not even a real memoir despite the title of the first work. Both are collections of short essays on various subjects triggered by Mathews’s encounters with particular volumes in his personal library. He calls these intellectual engagements “intersections.” The various essays in *Memoirs* are largely based on speeches that the professor has given to library groups and the Pittsburgh Bibliophiles, but completely rewritten and polished for the printed page. The chapters in *Booking*, similarly enhanced for book publication, are based on articles that the author has contributed to the likes of *Antioch Review* and *Southern Review*.

The third volume is subtitled “Selections from the Letters of Ernest J. Wessen.” Editor Mathews considers Wessen to have been a bookman of the caliber of Wright Howes or Colton Storm. The Mansfield, Ohio, bookseller remains somewhat of a regional legend because of his high-quality catalogues, *Midland Notes* (collectors’ items today, like yesteryear’s Boston newsletters, *The Month at Goodspeeds*) and also for his role in building Thomas Streeter’s remarkable collections of Americana.

Wessen’s prose is not just epistolary, it is very unpolished, never intended for publication. So the book is hardly as smooth a “read” as the other two. These are business letters, if gossipy and idiosyncratic ones, not mini-essays. The peppery bibliopole not only informed, but lectured and complained to, his correspondents — collectors, librarians, book scouts — in gabby missives that are both entertaining and informative. The impatient and very opinionated bookman hated reprints, tolerated book scouts and detested antique dealers. He saw only black and white, such as his beloved and scholarly rare book profession and (i.e, versus)

the used, o.p., or second-hand book business. There was no gray area of antiquarian books, such as Wright Howes's good-but-not-great bread-and-butter books. Wessen denigrated them as "catalog fillers." Yet, at the same time, he was one of the first dealers to tumble to the importance of ephemera in America!

The opinionated Wessen will probably annoy the devil out of you, at first. But you will probably end up with a grudging liking for such a zealous and expert bookman, if hardshell curmudgeon.

Both Jacob Blanck of BAL and Van Allen Bradley wanted Wessen to edit a collection of his Midland Notes annotations as a book. Perhaps it is time for Jack Mathews to take on the task.

— Richard H. Dillon



While completing the current *Quarterly News-Letter*, we received word on Friday, January 19, that Club member and master printer Lewis M. Allen had died Tuesday, January 13, 1998, at the age of eighty-nine. He leaves his wife, Dorothy, and a son, Stephen. We offer them our condolences.

In January of 1996, Lewis and Dorothy Allen shared The Club's annual Oscar Lewis Award for their contributions to fine printing. A full account of the Allen Press will appear in a later issue of QN-L, and The Club plans a memorial exhibition of the Allens' work.

— Albert Sperisen

## Gifts & Acquisitions

The Club has just acquired another early (and rare) imprint from a San Francisco printer-publisher: *The Golden State and its Resources*, by John J. Powell, Bacon & Company, Book and Job Printers, Clay Street, 1874. Powell, the author, was a notable explorer of the Grand Canyon. An inscription on the flyleaf of this copy is dated 1875.

The binding, unfortunately, is in bad shape, but the 210 pages of this unusual copy are unmarked and very clean throughout. Because of the book's rarity and the clean condition of the pages, we may consider having it re-bound if we cannot acquire a better copy.

—Albert Sperisen

The Texas State Historical Association has just given us the reprint edition of John Cassin's *Illustrations of the Birds of California, Texas, Oregon, British and Russian America*, published by them in 1991 for The Summerlee Foundation

of Dallas. The \$29.95 cost of the regular edition makes this book well worth the price of admission. A limited edition was published at \$75.00.

This book is an excellent facsimile of the original, and very uncommon, 1856 edition; it is reprinted by The Wind River Press with important front matter concerning the original edition. I was fortunately able to compare the reprint to the original edition and found the two books to be virtually the same except for the ink shine responsible for the luminosity of the original. Members interested in birds, natural history, or 19th century American color printing should acquire this volume.

The Club thanks Joanne Sonnichsen for her gift to the library of *Richesses de l'Arsenal*, a description of this important branch of the Bibliothèque National in Paris. It is one of a group of exhibit catalogs done by them and is a nice addition our resources.

— Barbara J. Land

Our Librarian, Albert Sperisen, has given The Club an early example of American lithography. It is a transfer drawing to stone by E. Rousseau, a professor of drawing and painting in New York City, done sometime after 1825. The sketch is an index of the notables in David's celebrated painting *The Coronation of Napoleon*, which was then being exhibited in New York. The painting itself is thirty-two feet high and twenty-two feet long, and was David's largest picture. Rousseau's sketch, of course, is far smaller and includes a numbered list for identifying the many distinguished observers on December 2, 1804, when Pope Pius VII crowned Napoleon Emperor in the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. Thank you, Albert, for this striking item to add to our collection of the history of printing.



The latest offering from Cynthia A. Savage of Leicester included a delightful Christmas card on special paper plus three illustrated poems and a Chinese proverb in the ongoing *Fenice Broadsheets* series. One poem, embellished with colored flowers, is by Club member Alix Weisz. Thank you once again, Cynthia, and all those who contribute to these beguiling items.

— Ann Whipple

## Serendipity

### Musings by the Committee Chairman

We have ventured further south than we normally do. Mentally crossing the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn brings us to that renowned writer Henry Miller. His family papers, book manuscripts, and art have brought good prices to the Pacific Book Auction sales last June and on January 15, and now another rare opportunity comes forth. Bob Young, of our up-river cousins, the Sacramento Book Collectors Club, has published a photographically illustrated personal memoir of Miller, *From a Different Angle*. In sixty-eight pages, Young provides the essence of his thirty-two-year friendship with this legendary author. The small, handmade edition of only one hundred copies, numbered and autographed, of course, is available from Roger Jackson, 339 Brookside Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48105, for a reasonable \$65.

We noticed BCC member Rudy Lapp's enthusiastic review in *California History* of a Gold Rush diary from May 1849 to April 1851. I.S.P. Lord's four-hundred pages of "caustic wit," Lapp asserts, "may prove to be the most detailed overland account yet published." The reviewer adds wryly: "Since he detested gambling, drinking, swearing, and smoking, Lord had a very limited circle of friends in California." Lord covers life in the mines, flooding in Sacramento, the cholera epidemic, and his return to Illinois as well. William Roth's article on cholera in the November 1997 *Pacific Historical Review* indicates the scarcity of material on that sickness. This diary, edited by Necia Dixon Liles, "will be increasingly quoted," Lapp declares. Order now: "At the Extremity of Civilization": An Illinois Physician's Journey to California in 1849 (Box 611, Jefferson, N.C. 28640: McFarland and Co., 1995, 441 pages, \$45). Though this glorious diary is "Not in Kurutz," — Gary closed his classic bibliography with 1994 publications — it does have his acclaim.

Lapp endorsed another fine work which came out in 1995. We are always happy to record the doings of the various Corrals of Westerners, and the San Diego Corral has produced a 243-page *Brand Book: Gold Rush Desert Trails to San Diego and Los Angeles in 1849*, which quotes the best accounts of the lesser-used Southern trails. (\$45 plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling.) It would be a good companion for Dick Dillon's out-of-print 1987 BCC *Texas Argonauts* [Kurutz, 212].

Before we drop our quill and head out to the diggin's on January 24, to celebrate 150 years of agitated activity in the Golden State, we will remark on Walter T. Durham's *Volunteer Forty-Niners: Tennesseans and the California Gold Rush* (1997). Publisher Vanderbilt University Press trumpets it as "the first book to examine the glittering dreams and rigorous experiences of forty-niners from a single state." Durham covers the California careers of such diverse immigrants as outlaw Tom Bell, Governor Peter Burnett, San Diego pioneer Cave J. Coutts, Admiral David G. Farragut, Superintendent of Public Instruction O.P. Fitzgerald, Senator William M. Gwin, Texas Ranger Jack Hays, banker John Parrott, filibuster William Walker, and Los Angeles landowner B.D. Wilson. We have noticed many 1850s express envelopes addressed to Judge A.M. Rosborough in Yreka; this '49er arrived as the superintendent of Nashville's "Tennessee Mining Company." (Vanderbilt University Press, Box 1813, Station B, Nashville, TN 37235; 800 288-0399; \$29.25, \$3.50 shipping.)

Even though friends have remarked on the similarity between us and Floridian John Cech's protagonist in *A Rush of Dreamers*, we will "puff" his novel. The primary character is His Imperial Highness, Norton I, Emperor of the United States and Protector of Mexico; the narrator, incidentally, began as "a printer's man in South Lancaster, smearing ink on Mr. Chandler's type," which, of course, drove us mad.... Cech bases his account on William Drury's fine 1986 biography. [New York: Marlowe & Company, 1997; 215 pages, \$20].



Recalling that The Book Club plans to do a book on Works Progress Administration prints, *Painting the Towns: Murals of California* becomes noteworthy. Robin J. Dunitz and James Prigoff survey fifty locales; San Francisco begins with Coit Tower, journeys through Mission District protests of the 1970s, and closes on current depictions to aid the homeless and other causes. [RJD Enterprises, P.O. Box 64668, Los Angeles 90064; 310 470-8864; 301 pages, \$29.95 paperback]



We regretfully observe the death on October 25, 1997, at age 140, of the most famous member of the Bloomsbury Group and host to scholars

worldwide. We refer to the closing of the British Library's Round Reading Room, where Virginia Wolfe felt "as if one was a thought in the huge bald forehead." Bernard Shaw observed the legendary copper-domed room at the center of the British Museum to be the place for "earnest seekers to heavy sleepers." Obviously, architect Sir Robert Smirke is not exemplifying his name now, for there are no smirks of joy for the new one. On November 24, the Reading Room opened in a "dim collection of brick sheds groping for significance," more fitted for "an academy for secret police," according to architectural critic HRH, Charles, Prince of Wales.

Gone, too, on October 3, is Alfred Leslie Rowse, at almost ninety-four, a curmudgeonly author of some ninety readable volumes on poetry, history, biography, and Shakespeare. This eccentric, stubborn, working-class Cornishman proudly declared himself to be the "greatest authority on the Elizabethan Age." Rowse collector and bibliographer Sydney Cauveren penned a touching memoir in *Biblio*, August 1997.



Nicholas Basbanes's gentle madness grows as he guides *Biblio* to the West Coast. The December 1997 issue features BCC member Peter B. Howard, proprietor of Serendipity Books, 1201 University Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94702 (510 841-7455) with its stock of a mere 400,000 volumes! Avid baseball fan Howard knows that it is a game of statistics, and therefore, carrying that over to bookselling, knows each one of his books. While the numbers stay fairly constant, the individual volumes do not. "I like to see booksellers in the habit of taking in new stock," Howard declares — while standing in large rooms where boxes of new arrivals continually limit the floor space. Serendipity specializes in the best of twentieth-century literature.



We must be getting ancient. We see from the first issue of the Book Club of Detroit's newsletter that 1940s copies of *Dick and Jane* readers are going for \$250. Actually, those are memories of our later youth. Our wife is convinced we are living in the 1860s. A few days ago, we were following the dictates of Cump Sherman, the local managing partner of Lucas, Turner & Co., bankers at Jackson and Montgomery streets, to "forage liberally," and encountered the four-volume kids' coloring books, *The Story of Cali-*

fornia & Her Flags (1996). Having just written generally on California in the Civil War and specifically on the Sanitary Commission and Indian José Chico, we were surprised to see in Volume 4 flags of various California units and a hard-charging cavalryman of Company D in the Owens Valley Indian War! Written by BCC member Henry Knill and illustrated by Alan Archambault, the historical flag volumes are \$4.95 each from Knill's Bellerophon Books, 122 Helena Avenue, Santa Barbara, CA 93101. [Our effusions appeared last year in the *Dogtown Territorial Quarterly*, publishing "California History at Its Very Best." Editors Bill and Penny Anderson begin their ninth year at 6848 U Skyway, Paradise, CA 95969 (530 872-3363); subscriptions \$15.]

— Robert J. Chandler



Robert Harlan, Club member and author of *The 200th Book*, has turned his talents in another direction of late; he interviewed esteemed printer-member Jack Werner Stauffacher for the Regional Oral History Office of The Bancroft Library. The results have appeared as a volume entitled "*The Word, Bearer of Our Confessions*": The Greenwood Press 1968-1996. This is Mr. Stauffacher's second volume; the first, "*A Printed Word Has Its Own Measure*", dates from 1969 and was based upon an interview conducted by Ruth Teiser. The late Miss Teiser, also a Book Club member, was tireless in her work of preserving the history of printing in the Bay Area, so it is satisfying to know that Professor Harlan is, as Willa Baum (ROHO's director) puts it, helping to carry the torch. Both volumes are available at \$46 each, plus \$4 shipping each, payable to the Friends of The Bancroft Library. Write to: Regional Oral History Office, 486 Library, University of California, Berkeley 94720. (Allow three months.)



Jack Stauffacher, always active in many ways, is now at work on a history and bibliography of the Greenwood Press, to be published by The Book Club with the support of the Lake Tahoe Community Trust.



News comes from designer-printer Michael Osborne that The Club's 1996 Keepsake, *California Book Illustrators*, was honored by an award of

excellence from the editors of *Communication Arts*. We thank them for the award and Michael Osborne and his team for their fine work.



There is still time to sign up for some of the Thursday evening calligraphy classes sponsored by Friends of Calligraphy. Ward Dunham's session on blackletter and uncial took place January 15-February 26, and Kathy McNicholas gives Beginning Italic March 19-April 30. To come are Monica Dengo, Italic Fundamentals, May 14-June 25, and Italic Variations, Kathy McNicholas, September 17-October 29. The sessions are at Fort Mason; call coordinator Georgianna Greenwood at 510 841-6924.



Club member Bo Wreden has forwarded information on a literary journey to South Florida planned for early May. Club members wishing more information about this trip, which will visit Key West and the Wolfsonian, among other surprising spots, may contact Mr. Wreden or Byra Wreden at 650 854-5049. We hear excellent reports of the book-centered excursions planned for the Associates of the Stanford University Libraries and the Friends of the Gleeson Library by this dauntless mother-and-son duo.



Joel Silver of *AB Bookman's Weekly* noticed Club publication No. 206, *The California Gold Rush: A Descriptive Bibliography*, in his column, "Some Memorable Books of 1997: A Personal Selection" (December 22-29, 1997). We are most pleased at this honor to Gary Kurutz's work, which Mr. Silver calls "one of the standard reference works in Western Americana" and describes as "very handsome" for W. Thomas Taylor's production of it. Although the bibliography has sold quite briskly, a few copies remain, and members who have not secured theirs are urged to do so.



The Club is always delighted by communications from members, especially at the holidays. Printer-members send us wonderful creations, lovely designs, pithy observations, even poetry. (You know who you are!) We are grateful, as we are at other seasons for reports of travels, adventures, and recreation. Among our "irregular pen pals," as he puts it, is "Tarjetus

Postalicus," who documents his travels in the form of striking photographic post cards (limited and numbered) with "a pithy spin on New England ecology and New York history." Then there are the retired military types who drop us witty lines about our errors and omissions; we appreciate it, honestly we do. Thanks to one and all for keeping in touch.



Paul Gervais Bell, President of the Book Club of Texas, lets us know that the Club has a new home, as of February 1, 1998, at Texas Tech University. The Club's publication program continues, with Jack Jackson's *Shooting the Sun* to appear later this spring. Information: J.C. Martin, 281 479-2421.

## Elected to Membership

### New Sustaining Member

James Bryant

Sunnyvale

Susan Klein

### New Regular Members

Keith W. Irwin

San Jose

Robert A. Clark

Ralph Joy

Alameda

Paul Gary Sterling

Michael W. Lowe

Jasper, GA

Al C. Adams, Jr.

Hugh McKell

Spokane, WA

Robert A. Clark

John Baldwin O'Donnell

San Francisco

John Crichton

Robert Schoeppner

Burlingame

Robert J. Chandler

Alexander Schwed

San Francisco

Emmett F. Harrington

Marc Selvaggio

Berkeley

John McBride

Lise Stampfli Tormé

San Anselmo

Harlan Kessel

Gold Discovery Research

Coloma

Gary Kurutz

Library

The following members have transferred from Regular to Sustaining status:

Garth K. Huston, Jr.

Leucadia

William Kostura

San Francisco

The following member has transferred from Sustaining to Patron status:

Wayne T. Kennedy

San Carlos

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